STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE
INNOVATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY
APRIL 29, 2014
MEETING NOTES

Present: Cori-Mantle-Bromley, Don Soltman, Mary Ann Ranells

Not Present: Senator Roy Lacey, Bill Brulotte

Guest: Carson Howell, Director of Research, State Board of Education

Chair, Cori Mantle-Bromley summarized the Governor's Task Force Recommendations which are the focus of this work group:

- #8   Statewide electronic collaboration system
- #10   Educator and student technology devices with appropriate content
- #17   Site-based collaboration among teachers and leaders
- #18   Training and development of superintendents and school boards

Carson Howell, Director of Research, State Board of Education, discussed Idaho's longitudinal data system. It is a single system (SLDS), composed of three separate elements: K-12, post secondary, and the labor data base. It was designed as three separate pieces for efficiency in housing the data and for security concerns. As three separate pieces, the system is more laborious, and requires personal input from each side in order for the three pieces to talk to each other.

The K-12 system, Idaho System for Educational Excellence (ISEE) requires monthly uploads of numerous data points. Some issues exist with the data process. As K12 data is loaded into ISEE, the Department checks the data, and if errors occur, it is sent back to the district for corrections. This can be a time-consuming process.

Mary Ann Ranells said that the Lakeland School district had invested in additional personnel to assist with the data uploads and therefore is in a better position than some small districts which definitely have more challenges. Data collection systems vary throughout the state among SchoolNet, Mileposts, PowerSchool and Skyward, so having the systems talk to each other causes frustration. People's jobs change drastically as more duties are added to their jobs.

Carson Howell reported that the larger districts who have capacity and knowledge have made great strides, but in smaller districts where the principal and superintendents is

often the same person, with one secretary, they do not have the resources for completing this task which results in inconsistent data. The State Board has addressed this problem with the State Department of Education (SDE) who has provided ISEE regional supervisors to assist the districts. Cori Mantle-Bromley asked how districts know who the regional supervisors are and how to access support. Mary Ann Ranells said that her district did not have very much luck with that person, but was fortunate to have Georgeanne Griffith, Director of Information Systems, who was a junior high school principal with a passion for technology, and has a knowledge base that a secretary would not have. The SDE has been very helpful in working with Ms. Griffiths.

MarilynWhitney said that the challenge seemed to be in the number of data elements. The Accountability and Autonomy work group will be looking at data from that standpoint. Part of the reason for the uploads is to analyze data at the state level. ISEE was also to allow teachers to access data about their students to assess progress and achievement and to identify gaps. The system is designed for teachers, principals, administrators as well as for the State. Mr. Howell acknowledged that one of the complaints received from districts is that their date is input accurately, but they do not trust the accuracy of the information returned from the system. Mary Ann Ranells agreed, although she said it has improved from a year ago. If the information is not accurate, it affects funding, especially for small districts.

Don Soltman asked what could be done so that people are comfortable and trust the information. Mary Ann Ranells said that perhaps Accountability and Autonomy will look at what data is actually needed and used at the state level. She sometimes questions why some of the data is being requested and who it would help.

Cori Mantle-Bromley questioned if it would be beneficial if everyone were using the same data collection system so that the people who are helping the districts would only need to learn one system. Carson Howell replied that the same system would definitely help, but a problem would likely arise if small districts had to purchase a new system.

Don Soltman reminded the group that the Albertson Foundation was funding SchoolNet. The goal was to pull data from ISEE to populate SchoolNet. Carson Howell said that in ISEE, there is a lot of data, like discipline records, attendance by period, etc. Marilyn Whitney added that the data is enormous and attendance is related to funding. It was intended to be robust, but there have been issues with accuracy.

Cori Mantle-Bromley asked how many districts were using SchoolNet, Mileposts, PowerSchool, Skyward or other data collection systems. Mary Ann Ranells said there is a mix in Region 1. "If I went to our folks and said now we have to change, that would be the last day of my career. People would come unglued." However, for the districts who are

struggling, if an option were available with support from the State, then a district might better consider changing to alternate system.

Carson Howell said that the postsecondary system has fewer problems than K-12. They work closely with institutional research groups at each campus who have the technical background and experience to do the work. They upload the data and the Department matches it with K-12 and the Labor Department. There is some limitation with labor data, such as what an individual is actually doing. If a graduate got a job at a hospital in information technology (IT), they would be classed as health care industry. Similarly, they know how many graduates obtained a job, but not whether it was in their field of study. Quarterly earnings do not reflect tell how much during a quarter a person was working.

Cori Mantle-Bromley said that each institution was asked how many students were teaching, and the data came back and said that 15% of University of Idaho graduates were teaching and they knew the number was higher. They reviewed the graduation lists, sent data back, and the new figure came back at 50%, but she really believed it was closer to 75%. That was a year ago, and Carson Howell said that things had improved since then.

Cori Mantle-Bromley said that a federal mandate will require that teacher data on student performance will be tied to an institution. Carson Howell replied that part of ISEE is instructor data. Teachers have an EDU identification number (EDU ID) which would match them to postsecondary institutions. As those pre-service teachers progress through the system, their grades in each course would be recorded. Pieces are in place, but data accuracy is important.

Marilyn Whitney reminded the group that data reporting was only one part; SchoolNet was also designed to be a collaboration tool between teachers in a school, a district, and statewide, to share ideas and lesson plans. Carson Howell said that postsecondary institutions use the Blackboard system.

Marilyn Whitney asked Mr. Howell to describe the National Student Clearing House (NSCH), whose overarching goal is to support the 60% Goal. NSCH collects data on enrollments and graduations. Most superintendents request data on how many graduates go on to college, and they use the NSCH to answer that question. The NSCH also informs the public and private colleges outside the state as well as instate. The ISEE system facilitates that information match. Mr. Howell said that the State Board now publishes a report for go-on rates, which looks at a high school graduate's transition over time – whether they went to college immediately after high school, or entered 4-5 years later.

Mr. Howell said that the biggest challenge in ISEE is verifying data as it comes in. Progress is being made, but cleanup needs to be done so that accurate data can go back to the

districts and postsecondary institutions where it can be used on the front lines. Given the precedence of Senator Geodde's bill to protect student data in response to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Coalition (SBAC) test, he anticipates that three to six months will be required for cleanup to occur. Mary Ann Ranells said that she has seen the vision with SchoolNet and the way it changes the way in which teachers teach with these resources and formative assessments. "I hope we don't abandon the dream."

Marilyn Whitney updated the group on Representative Wendy Horman's Strategic Planning bill which goes into effect on July 1st.   It allocates money to districts for training school boards and superintendents in strategic planning. The State Board staff and stakeholder groups are working to identify qualified trainers. In order for a district to receive the $2,000 for training, they would need to use these qualified trainers. Parts of this bill also related to data systems: the system is required to contain measurable student outcomes. Ms. Whitney suggested that the group consider what kind of training is needed. The bill calls for training, but does not specify training for data gathering and analysis. The group might also think longer term about the kind training superintendents and school boards might need in order to develop and use the data that ISEE and the longitudinal data system will make available.

Cori Mantle-Bromley noted that Idaho Capacity Builders have been working in three locations around the State to assist schools in using and understanding data. Mary Ann Ranells was not familiar with them because they primarily deal with struggling schools.

Mary Ann Ranells also talked about the Ways to Improve School Effectiveness (WISE) tool and Title 1 funding.[1] The WISE tool utilizes several categories to enter school improvement plans and track student performance. The WISE tool is not popular among the districts. Ms. Rannels questioned why strategic planning legislation was put in place. Marilyn Whitney replied that the bill was brought by the House Education Committee because it wanted to act on the task force recommendations. School boards cannot be required to obtain training, so the money was designed to be an incentive to boards to actually be trained. She said she did not think that board members will want a process that is not substantive. Representative Wendy Horman, who brought bill, did not want these work committees to be constrained by the bill if there is a better way, or if changes are needed to it. She would be happy to meet with this committee.

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[1] Title I-A targets resources to districts and schools where the needs are greatest. Title I-A provides flexible funding for additional instructional time for students who are most at risk for not meeting state academic standards. This funding may also be used to provide professional development, extended-time programs, and other strategies for raising student achievement in high-poverty schools. Title I-A provisions provide a mechanism for holding states, school districts, and schools accountable for closing the achievement gaps and improving the academic achievement of all students. State Department of Education Website.

Mary Ann Ranells led a discussion about site-based collaboration. In Lakeland School District this means that educators work (1) in collaborate teams with collective responsibility (2) with guaranteed and viable curriculum, vetted for core standards, unit by unit; (3) teams develop an ongoing assessment process and use the assessments to intervene or enrich individual learning; and (4) schools are responsible for providing a systematic process of intervention. Lakeland schools use one hour on Monday mornings for collaboration; it is not enough. They would like more time for in-depth training, collaboration, research and guest speakers. Lakeland School District also requires that all administrators receive six days of Danielson training. She said, "if we want to increase student achievement, I would encourage principles to evaluate professional learning communities, not individual teachers." When she evaluates principals, it is based on the collaboration and result more than on teacher evaluations. Parent and student evaluations are also considered. Ms. Ranells added that the grant money they had received for professional development has helped to send teachers to workshops. Ideally she would like to see all elementary teachers meeting once per month for 1.5 to 2 hours, and quarterly for a half or full day.

Alex Macdonald from SDE discussed the collaborative components of SchoolNet and the differences between SchoolNet and Mileposts. He stated that the Albertson's Foundation has purchased the license and that the Department now owns it on their own servers and will continue to receive product updates and enhancements. Use of SchoolNet is voluntary, not mandated, and is available in every school district. Initially 42 districts received grant licenses; a total of 120 districts (out of 160) have logged in. Some use it for assessments, others for professional development, and others for data metrics. SchoolNet recently released Outreach, an online discussion forum that works in a hierarchal system at the school, district and state level.

The advantages of SchoolNet over Mileposts are RTI[2] components, progress monitoring, student flags, SchoolNet Assessment Builder, SBAC components, teacher evaluator components, school improvement, and a digital library of professional development tools with resources automatically linked. Mr. Macdonald feels there is an advantage to having all districts on SchoolNet because of collaboration, assessments, benchmark access, and a more heightened sense of collaboration.

Don Soltman raised the question of local control. Mr. Macdonald replied that recent legislation allowed an option for districts to use the appropriation for IT staffing.

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[2] Idaho Response to Intervention (RTI) is a framework for continuous improvement. RTI integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools use data to identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning or other disabilities, as defined by state law.

Mary Ann Ranells discussed Mileposts. Whether the district was small or large, Mileposts was very user friendly with quick access to student data. Lakeland School District moved to SchoolNet because they were one of the grant districts. It has not been without challenges, but she has seen some of the best lessons developed and has seen teachers excited about their own data. She has seen departments send out a survey and display results at the next meeting. She is very excited about the possibilities and usefulness.

Cori Mantle-Bromley asked Mr. Macdonald what is next for SchoolNet so that it be robust but not so complex and resistance-filled. Mr. Macdonald replied the SDE is planning for self-hosting which will save on maintenance costs, and it will be tied into to ISEE with a streamlined approach. They are focusing on the Idaho Core Standards and SBAC activity. In professional development, they are working to show how it can support and help teachers to understand components and how they fit into their lesson plans. Data loads are quicker, and the landing page has a new look and feel. The superintendent's advisory committee has shared many great ideas that can be replicated for more purposeful data.

Mr. Macdonald again stated that through the Albertston's foundation, the SDE had purchased the license to SchoolNet, loaded it on their servers, and they will continue to receive product updates, enhancement, and technologies.

Marilyn Whitney affirmed that use of SchoolNet is voluntary, not mandatory. Cori Mantle-Bromley, Mary Ann Ranells and Mr. Macdonald all agreed that it should remain voluntary. Mr. Macdonald stated that many districts have been using other platforms and have processes in place which are very effective. Some districts use aspects of SchoolNet as well as Mileposts. The assistance to districts is given on SchoolNet, rather than Mileposts, but also on facilitating data stewardship and how to use data to create a vision; what data is being collected and why does it matter.

The committee briefly discussed technology devices, the state's technology pilots and 21st century classrooms. They agreed that technology needs to be tied to student learning.

NEXT MEETING: May 13, 2014   9:00am – 11:00am Mountain Time;

                                 8:00am -- 10:00am Pacific Time

Next Meeting Agenda:

Technology devices; integration with core standards, 21st Century Classroom; ISEE

Guests to include:

Dr. Royce Kimmons, Cassidy Hall, Doceo Center for Innovation Learning;
Eric Keller, NUU;
Greg Bailey, Superintendent, Moscow School District;
Georgeanne Griffith, Director, Information Systems, Lakeland School District
Joyce Popp, Alex Macdonald